

Message Text

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 01 KATHMA 05508 230954Z

21

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 DIWY-01 CU-02 OES-03 IO-10 L-03 PA-01

PRS-01 USIA-06 /038 W

----- 003676

R 230730Z DEC 75

FM AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3780

INFO AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE KATHMANDU 5508

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SOCI PGOV PINT NP

SUBJECT: KING GRANTS WOMEN MORE RIGHTS IN NEPAL

1. KING BIRENDRA DECEMBER 19 PROMULGATED NEW AMENDMENTS TO CIVIL CODE WHICH GRANT WOMEN CONSIDERABLE RIGHTS NOT PREVIOUSLY ENJOYED UNDER NEPALESE LAW. AMENDMENTS, ISSUED TO HONOR INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S YEAR, INCLUDE LAWS AIMED AT RESTRICTING CHILD MARRIAGE, POLYGAMY, AND INEQUITABLE DIVISION OF JOINT PROPERTY.

2. SPECIFICALLY, ELIGIBLE AGE OF MARRIAGE HAS BEEN RAISED FROM 14 TO 16 FOR WOMEN. GIRLS MAY NOW MARRY AT 18 WITHOUT CONSENT OF PARENTS OR GUARDIAN (PREVIOUSLY 21). UNMARRIED DAUGHTERS OVER AGE 35 WILL NOW SHARE EQUALLY WITH MALE SIBLINGS IN DIVISION OF FAMILY PROPERTY AND IN CASES OF DIVORCE A WIFE MAY CLAIM 50 PERCENT OF HUSBAND'S PROPERTY PROVIDED THEY ARE BOTH AT LEAST 35 YEARS OF AGE AND HAVE BEEN MARRIED FOR 15 YEARS. DIVORCED MOTHERS WILL HAVE CUSTODY OF CHILDREN UNDER AGE OF FIVE, EXCEPT IN "UNUSUAL CIRCUMSTANCES." PENALTIES FOR POLYGAMY, STILL WIDELY PRACTICED AMONG CERTAIN ETHNIC GROUPS IN NEPAL, HAVE BEEN INCREASED.

3. COMMENT: THE NEW LAWS COME SHORTLY ON THE HEELS OF THE CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS WHICH, INTER ALIA, WILL GIVE WOMEN AN INCREASED ROLE IN THE COUNTRY'S POLITICAL LIFE. UNDER LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 02 KATHMA 05508 230954Z

THE NEW PANCHAYAT SYSTEM, WOMEN MUST SERVE ON EVERY PANCHAYAT,

WHETHER THROUGH ELECTION OR DIRECT NOMINATION. THIS WILL MEAN
THAT NEARLY 4,000 WOMEN WILL BE INDUCTED INTO THE PANCHAYAT
SYSTEM. THE NEPAL WOMEN'S ORGANIZATION HAS MADE INCREASED
LITERACY AMONG RURAL WOMEN ITS NUMBLR ONE PRIORITY THIS YEAR
AND HAS EFFECTIVELY USED THE CAMPAIGN TO EDUCATE WOMEN ON
THEIR LEGAL RIGHTS. THE KING'S MEASURES, WHILE WELCOME,
WILL BE DIFFICULT TO ENFORCE SINCE MANY OF THE NEW LAWS FLY
IN THE FACE OF TRADITION. PROPERTY RIGHTS, FOR EXAMPLE,
ARE TRADITIONALLY DISTRIBUTED BY MALE MEMBERS OF A JOINT
FAMILY AND IT WILL TAKE A BRAVE WOMEN TO FIGHT FOR HER
RIGHTS EVEN WITH THE PROTECTION OF LAW.
CARGO

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: WOMEN, SOCIAL CHANGE, CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 23 DEC 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: MorefiRH
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975KATHMA05508
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750445-0318
From: KATHMANDU
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19751216/aaaaanll.tel
Line Count: 73
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: MorefiRH
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 06 AUG 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <06 AUG 2003 by CunninFX>; APPROVED <07 AUG 2003 by MorefiRH>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: KING GRANTS WOMEN MORE RIGHTS IN NEPAL
TAGS: SOCI, PGOV, PINT, NP
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006